

TOWN OF SALEM, CT.

Economic Development Commission

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TOWN OF SALEM, CT

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Regular Meeting, January 25, 2016 7:30 p.m. Salem Office Building, Room 2

ASST. TOWN CLERK
Shirley Alligood

Minutes

Meeting called to order at 7:35 pm by meeting chair Frank Sroka.

Members present:

Frank Sroka

Ken Bondi

Ada Vaill

Andy Lightner

Members not present:

Wendy Mikolinski

Paul Robillard (Alternate)

Visitors:

Stu Gadbois, Elby Burr, Kevin Lyden

Frank also introduced Stu Gadbois, newly appointed liaison to EDC from the Board of Selectmen, replacing Bob Ross, and Elby Burr, newly appointed by the Board of Selectmen as an Alternate Member of EDC.

1. Reading of Agenda – chairperson

Frank Sroka presented agenda. No changes were made to the agenda.

Motion: Ken Bondi moved to approve the Minutes for the 12/21/2015 meeting. Seconded by Andy Lightner. Unanimously approved.

2. Communications

- a. Frank discussed the recent meeting of the Planning and Zoning Commission, which voted at that time unanimously to approve the application of Fox Farm Brewery for an agricultural overlay zone for their planned brewery and taproom on the former Lubart dairy farm property at 62 Music Vale Road. The motion and vote was made “with stipulations,” which were taken largely and almost verbatim from the

applicant's narrative and site plan, which were a main component of their application. The EDC viewed this action with total agreement, as we had officially supported the application at the P&Z public hearing in December, 2015. This action adds a new and distinctive destination location within the Town of Salem. It also demonstrates a willingness of Salem to welcome new businesses to town, especially those that fit with our rural character and are consistent with our approved POCD.

3. Public Comment

a. With the additional members and officials present, there was a general discussion of several topics, including the decline in school enrollment (and related budget issues); the possibility of developing cluster housing for residents age 55 and older; the continuing search for new business partners to occupy vacant space (the former Restore location) at Burnett's Country Gardens; improved methods to publicize the unique attributes and positive aspects of Salem as a business site and place to live; with the planned growth of Electric Boat, should we encourage the development of more studio apartment/small affordable rental housing in town for new employees who may be starting their first "real job" but often do not have additional family members and are newly relocating to the area (the studio apartment rentals at and near the roundabout are very popular and are never vacant for very long).

4. Reports

- a. Selectman/EDC Liaison. Stu Gadbois has assumed this responsibility, replacing Bob Ross. Stu plans to attend future meetings on a regular basis.
- b. P&Z Liaison (Ada Vaill). No report.
- c. 2015 EDC Annual Report submittal to the First Selectman's office for inclusion in the Salem Annual Town Report for FY 2014-2015. This report was prepared by Wendy Mikolinski, EDC Secretary and approved by Frank Sroka, who submitted it as required. Frank also distributed the report to EDC members and requested a motion and vote to make this action official. Motion by Andy Lightner to approve the EDC Annual Report for FY 2014-2015 as written and submitted; seconded by Ada Vaill. Motion carried unanimously.

5. Old Business

- a. Business owners' survey: Frank stated that he would follow up with Kevin Lyden to check on responses to the recently published business owners' survey in Our Town Salem. It may be necessary to re-publish this article to increase the level of responses, which were to be sent to the First Selectman's office.

- b. Salem Business data base: Frank stated that he would follow up with Kevin Lyden and request, on behalf of EDC, that the Assessor's Office provide additional data, as available, to make this report more complete and updated on a regular basis.

6. New Business

- a. Potential uses for non-residential zoned land. Those present held a discussion on the possibility of Salem getting into the solar energy business, similar to current efforts underway in Norwich, using town-owned land. There was also a discussion of possibly making town-owned land available for certain housing uses as appropriate, or other business uses. There will be further discussion with the Selectmen on these topics.

7. Next Meeting Date/Adjournment.

Next regular meeting is scheduled for Monday, February 22, 2016 at 7:30 p.m. in Salem Town Hall, Room 2. Note this is the fourth Monday, due to the holiday on the third Monday.

Ken Bondi moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Ada Vaill. Unanimously approved.

Meeting Adjourned 9:05 p.m.